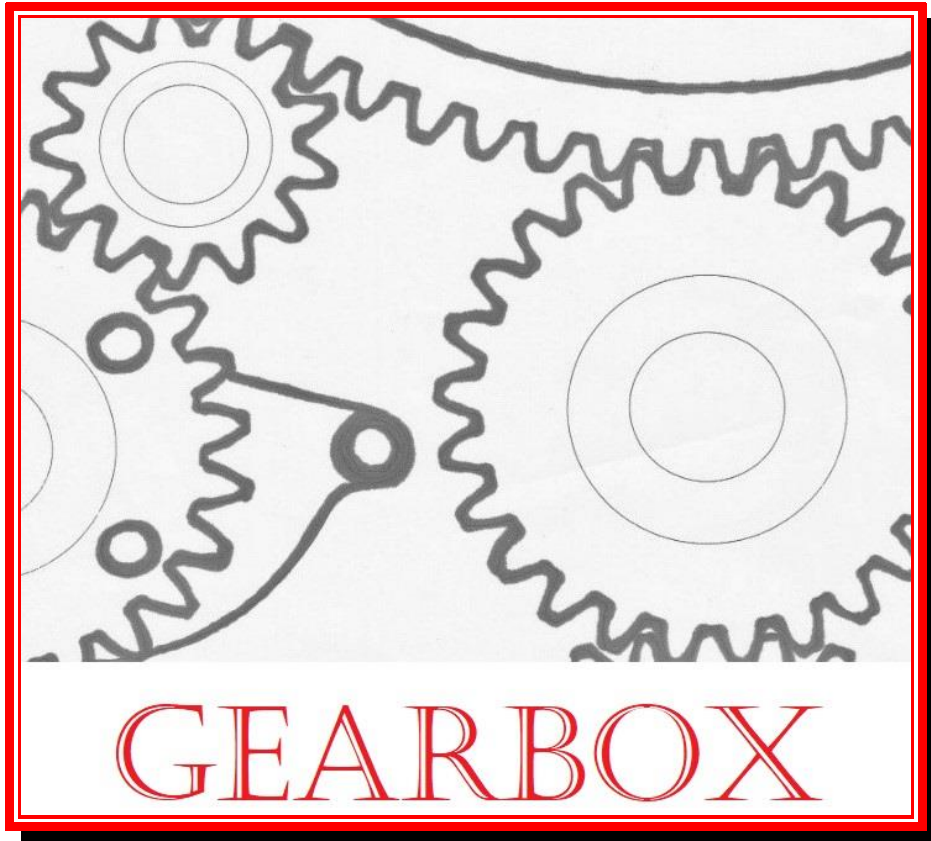
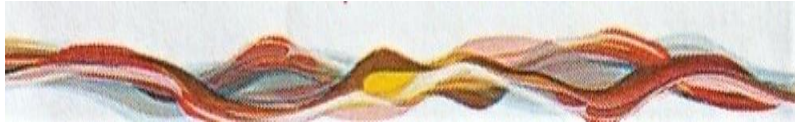


HUNTER MODEL AUTO CLUB INC



OCTOBER 2021 EDITION.

CONTACT: Brian Fairhurst Ph (02) 4930 1154 OR Bill Kenchington Ph (02) 4945 4830



THE HQ HOLDEN WAS 50 YEARS OLD IN JULY. STILL LOOKING GOOD.

HUNTER MODEL AUTO CLUB – SECRETARY’S REPORT FOR SEPTEMBER 2021

“Zoom” September Meeting

With the Covid-19 Government lockdown in place our “Normal” meeting and model competition for September were cancelled.

Thanks to Allan Evans, a “Zoom” meeting was arranged as a substitute. The following members participated – Allan, Paul, David S, Terry, Andrew V, Ben, Diane and Bill.

Whilst there was no business conducted at this meeting, we were able to view an interesting video on the development and production of the Jeep during World War 2 as well as view the model entries for voting in this month’s “Virtual” model competition. It would have been good to have had a few more of our members participating as those who did attend found it enjoyable to meet up, have a chat and so keep our Club alive.

“Virtual” September Model Competition Results: “A Pair of the Same Vehicle of Different Scales” – One (1) pair only and ONE PHOTO ONLY.

1 st	Ernie Williams.....	Geoghegan’s Chargers.....	14 Points
2 nd	Terry Payne.....	VH Valiant Chargers.....	11 Points
3 rd	Bill Kenchington.....	XP Falcon Hard Tops.....	10 Points

Next Meeting: Whilst this meeting is planned for Tuesday 12 October at 7.00pm for 7.30pm at Edgeworth Sport and Rec Club, it is doubtful that the Club will be available for us to hold our meeting.

As a substitute we plan to hold a **“Zoom” meeting organised by Allan Evans commencing at 7.30pm on Tuesday 12 October 2021.** Allan will email members a link to this meeting.

Next “Virtual” Model Category: “A Luxury Vehicle” – Any scale one (1) model only and ONE PHOTO ONLY.

I will advise you by email/text should circumstances change to allow us to hold this meeting at Edgeworth Sport and Rec Club in which case the “Normal” Model Category would be: “Two Tone Vehicle” – Any scale up to five (5) models.

When we are allowed to resume our meetings at the Club, you will not be allowed in unless you provide proof of double Covid-19 vaccination status.

Bill Kenchington – Secretary

CLUB’S ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Unfortunately, with the Covid-19 restrictions being in place we have been unable to hold our AGM since the 2019 Meeting.

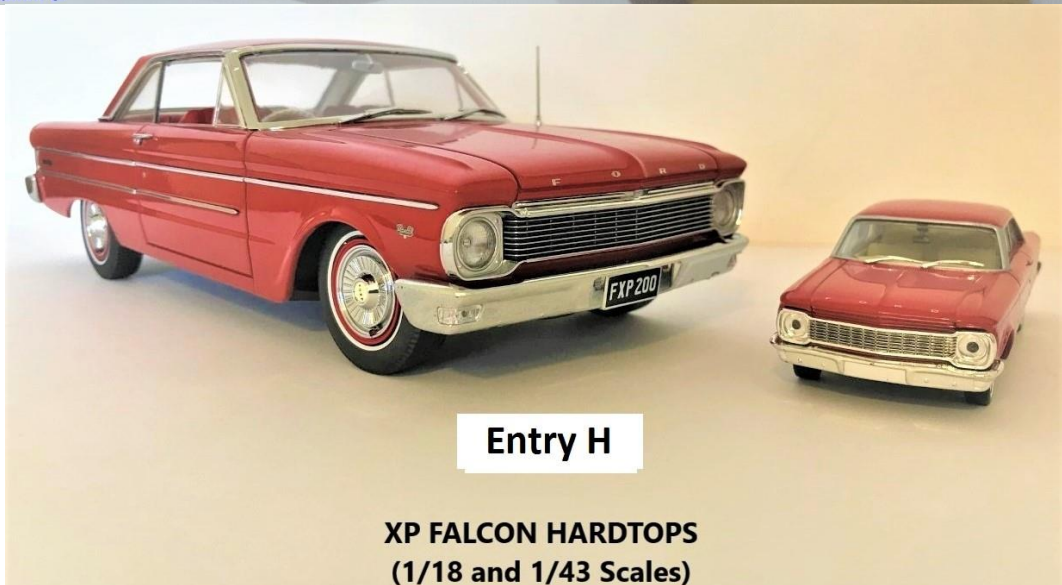
If all goes well with Government Covid-19 lockdown being lifted on 11 October and there being no further restrictions, we plan to hold our **Annual General Meeting (Election of Office Bearers, Selection of Model Categories and Setting the Club Subscriptions for 2022) on 9 November 2021 at 7.00pm for 7.30pm at our normal venue Edgeworth Sport and Rec Club.**

Members are reminded to give some thought as to who you want as our Club Board, what categories you want for the 2022 Model Competition and what the Annual Subscriptions should be set as.

As previously agreed, we propose to continue with the “Virtual” Model Competition in 2022 in conjunction with the “Actual” Model Competition. We will only need to select categories for the “Actual” Model Competition as we will use those categories from the 2021 “Actual” Model Competition for the 2022 “Virtual” Model Competition. This will save us having to select two lots of categories.

FAMOUS SAYINGS: *Enzo Ferrari is reported to have said, ‘I don’t sell cars, I sell engines. The car I throw in for free since something has to hold the engine’*

-RESULTS OF THE HMAC SEPTEMBER 'VIRTUAL' MODEL COMPETITION-



From the top – 1st: Ernie's Geoghegan's Valiant Chargers. **2nd:** Terry's pair of VH Chargers and **3rd:** Bills XP Falcon Hardtops.

--IKA TORINO – One of Argentina’s best--



No, *the lead-in pic* is not a Rambler model, though the resemblance to the 1964 to 1969 Rambler `American' is significant. It is an *IKA Torino*, released in late 1966, and a vehicle that became the pride of the Argentinian nation and a very popular purchase till it ceased production in 1982. This is another story on vehicles from Argentina that I have acquired as so-called `IXO' brand 1:43 scale diecast models, and it follows on from the *IKA Bergantin* story.



Above left is an ad for the Torino coupe. At right an AMC factory pic for a 1964 Rambler American coupe ad.

As mentioned in a previous [Gearbox article](#), in the early 1950's, Argentina's dictatorship under their leader Juan Peron and his government, sought the establishment of various manufacturing industries in Argentina from other Countries, especially those involved in automobile and aircraft production. One that took up the offer was the U.S automaker, Kaiser, who set up *IKA* in 1955. [Industrias Kaiser Argentina.] Kaiser had taken over Willys Motors and the first vehicles they produced in Argentina were Jeeps in standard, pick-up, station wagon and van forms.

Then came the `Carabela' in 1958 which was a large four door sedan derived from the about to be defunct U.S Kaiser Manhattan. By 1958, *IKA* was producing 81% of Argentina's locally manufactured vehicles, mainly consisting of the Argentinian Jeep models and the Carabela sedan. In 1960 IKA introduced a mid-size sedan called the IKA `Bergantin' and derived from the Alfa 1900 sedan. [See previous Gearbox article.](#)

Looking for further markets worldwide, Renault became a minor shareholder in IKA in 1959 and Renault vehicles commenced production in Argentina with the first being an IKA badged Dauphine. In 1960, IKA commenced producing a locally built AMC Rambler, including the Classic model, from 1962 to 1971.

In 1965 IKA decided to build a vehicle that, in style, would be the equivalent of European models and, in power and reliability, would be akin to North American products. However, due to the fact that clean-sheet development and pre-production costs would be enormous, they decided to send two Rambler American models to Italy, a sedan and coupe, and have them redesigned there by Pininfarina.

The object was to design a vehicle based on the existing lines of the Rambler but with styling points that would appeal to Argentina's European ethos. It became the *IKA Torino* and was released to the public in late 1966 in sedan and coupe form. That explains the similar lines to the Rambler American as can be seen in *the lead-in pic*.

There were two straight six overhead cam engines available for the Torino, both locally built and they were of 2968cc capacity and a more powerful 3770cc 'Tornado Interceptor' engine with triple Webber carbies and producing 131kw of power through a 4 speed manual gearbox. This would be the '380' 2 door model that IXO produced. **See final pics of author's model.** The interior was redesigned by Pininfarina and was very similar to an Italian luxury GT sports car in appearance with wood panelling across the dash that housed a wide range of sports gauges and a three spoke wooden rimmed steering wheel.

Motoring journalists in Argentina wrote that it was smoother and more powerful than many similar sized vehicles of the 1970's with an excellent 'ease of driving' feel through the steering wheel. The Torino quickly became viewed as an Argentinian motoring icon, and would be later badged as an IKA *Renault* Torino. However, there was another reason for its cult status besides the fact that it was, in reality, a very classy motor vehicle.

To show the people of Argentina that they had a National car to be proud of, in 1969 IKA set up a team of three IKA Torinos to run in what was considered then, the most gruelling motor vehicle race in the world, the **Nurburgring 84 hour race**. The team was managed by Argentina's five times world F1 champion, Juan Fangio and his son would be one of the drivers in the race. Argentina isn't considered a power in motor racing today, but back then it was probably the best watched sport in Argentina after soccer. As an aside, Mick Doohan holds the record for most victories in the Argentine Motorcycle GP which he won three times, in 1994, 1995 and 1998.

Under the guidance of Fangio, one of the IKA Torino vehicles ran the full 84 hours completing laps of the famous track day and night with only three drivers sharing the workload. They finished the race in first place having completed 334 laps of the Nurburgring and way ahead of the next finishers. The other two Torinos did not finish. Though first over the line, unfortunately, the race officials applied a few time penalties to the winning Torino that put it back into fourth place 'officially.' The winning Torino is kept in Argentina's Fangio museum today and the other two, both taken for an occasional drive and appearance at special events, are still well-preserved by their owners.



IXO 1:43 scale diecast models of the 1970 four door version of the IKA 'Renault' Torino.

FOR THE COLLECTOR:

IXO (in reality, probably Altaya or De Agostini as they are from a magazine + model series) have the 1970 IKA *Renault* Torino in 1:43 scale diecast 4-door models in silver or a reddish bronze **as above**. **IXO** also have the 1967 IKA Torino 2-door versions, for around A \$100 landed from Argentina; A \$70 landed from Britain or, like my model **as shown in the pics below**, available for around forty Aussie dollars landed from China.

EBay have a '**BUBY**' brand [actually made in Argentina] 1:43 scale diecast model of a 2-door IKA Torino in Beige colour for close to A \$400 and that is without shipping costs. **Ouch!!!** But if you want something really exceptional after your Lotto win, you can purchase a highly detailed 2-door IKA Torino in 1:8 scale diecast from an unnamed maker similar to **Amalgam**, for around A \$3,500 landed, as advertised on eBay at the time of writing. **Terry.**



-SOME AUSSIE MOTORING HISTORY - THE BUICK BRAND IN AUSTRALIA-

I never knew how big **Buick** was in Australia till I read a book recently on its history out here. So, I thought I'd relate some information on Buick in Australia using some of the information and old style photographs obtained from this book 'Buick in Australia' by Eric North and John Gerdtz. It was originally published in 2008 and well before the demise of our biggest automaker, Holden, that followed on from their decision, as well as that of Ford and Toyota, to cease production of motor vehicles in Australia. So, it was interesting to read a book showing Holden having had a major link to Buick in the early years of our automotive industry, yet knowing that Holden no longer exists, a situation probably not foreseen at the time of publication as Holden was probably our top selling family car then.

Buick builds vehicles in many Countries today including the USA, Canada, China, and Germany, but only a few years ago, around 80% of their sales were in China where they were considered a premium brand. However, the 'Buick' appellation on badging is no longer attached to those vehicles as they use a 'triple shield' logo and sales of Buick products have begun to decline in China recently. Maybe this could be attributed in part to the faltering relations between the US and China as well as the growing auto manufacturing giant that is China today.

Of note, there was a Holden connection with China during the early 2000's with their WM Statesman exported to China badged as the **Buick Royaum**. It was available in both a 3.6-litre and 2.8-litre V6 engine built in Holden's Victorian engine plant. For a while, the Royaum was replaced by the Buick **Park Avenue**, another re-badged Holden Caprice, but assembled in China with a new interior designed by, and supplied from within China.

The Buick story started in the late 1800s, after David Dunbar Buick, a successful plumbing goods stockist and distributor took an interest in the internal combustion engine and with two engineers, commenced building marine engines and then automobiles. Buick had little finance to start with and this led to it being taken over by the Flint Wagon Works. [Flint being a city in Michigan, US.] Buick automobiles started to be produced there in 1904.

William Durant, owner of the massive Durant-Dort Carriage Company, also took an interest in the firm turning Buick into the largest selling car in the US by 1908. Durant used Buick as a base for creating the **General Motors Corporation** and soon purchased Oldsmobile and Cadillac followed by more automaking companies. In 1911, the General Motors Export Company [**GME**] was formed to distribute GM products worldwide with Buick as the foremost model. In 1912, the GME Company opened an office in Sydney to manage the distribution of Buicks and soon introduced a new marque to Australia, GM's entry level model, the Oakland. Buick quickly became the financial backbone of the GM empire until Chevrolet merged with GM in 1918.

The image contains two vintage advertisements for Buick cars. The left advertisement is for 'THE BUICK' and features a side-view illustration of an early 20th-century open-top touring car. The text below the illustration reads: 'A REVELATION IN LUXURY, EFFICIENCY, and POWER. From £285 Complete. ONE TRIAL WILL CONVINCE. Write for Catalogue DALGETY & CO. LTD., MELBOURNE.' The right advertisement is for 'THE "BUICK 6."' and features a side-view illustration of a similar but slightly more modern touring car. The text below the illustration reads: 'Valve in Head.' and 'Value for Petrol.' followed by 'THE DOCTOR'S CAR. A CONSIGNMENT OF THESE SPLENDID CARS JUST LANDED. PRICES COMPLETE. ROADSTERS £410. TOURING £425. Built on Engineering principles. Real Leather. Best Finish. Making Shoddy "THE CAR THAT EVERY KEEN MAN CRAVES."' At the bottom of the right ad, it says 'DALGETY'S GARAGE, Phone A1647. WILLIAM-STREET, PERTH.'

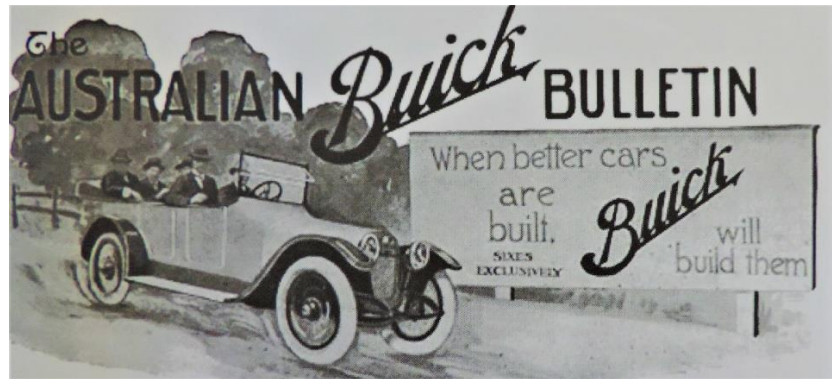
Above left an ad for the 1912 Buick for sale by Dalgety and Company in Melbourne and at right, a 1915 ad for Buick being sold at Dalgety's garage in Perth.

Australians still preferred English products, and to a degree this meant Buicks were landed out here in small numbers initially. However, the Right Hand Drive Buick models made in the USA, were already appearing in Australia from as early as 1905 with Buick advertising appearing regularly in Australian newspapers by 1908.

Over in the US, Buick was making a name in the fledgling motor vehicle competitions arena and their success was also used to promote the Aussie Buick in their sales advertising. A few companies such as Chipman Limited, represented Buick in Australia from 1908 but with the formation of GME, there was no problem importing the Buick into Australia on a more organised parent company distribution structure and on a State by State basis.

Alick McNeil and McIntosh Limited of Sydney were the first distributor to provide regular Buick product sales and service and they made ample use of the newspapers for Buick advertising. This is probably why McIntosh is regarded as being responsible for Buick's huge success in Australia well before GME opened their office in Sydney.

There are many depictions in publications of advertisements taken out in various State newspapers indicating that a large number of companies had taken up the sale of Buick vehicles after GME had commenced distribution operations here. Besides those in other States such as Dalgety in Melbourne and Perth and the Howard Motor Company in Brisbane, Buick agencies were appearing in rural areas. According to 'Buick in Australia,' by 1913, NSW had Buick agencies in Tenterfield, Moree, Armidale, Kempsey, Narrandera, Coffs Harbour, Forbes and Wagga.



GME launched the first edition of the Australian Buick Bulletin for dealers in 1915 .

And now the Holden link. Mark McInnes, a retired former Public Relations Manager of GMH, in his forward to this book, said that few would know that Australia was GM's largest export market for many years and that in **1923**, ***Holden Motor Body Builders*** was contracted to be GM's suppliers of automobile bodies in Australia. Holden quickly became the largest body maker outside of North America and subsequently had assembly plants built in five of Australia's mainland Capitol cities. It took up till 1934 for GM's German Opel and English Vauxhall Divisions to surpass Holden's production numbers.

In 1854, James Holden commenced his successful saddlery and components company in Adelaide and when he retired, left it to his son, Henry, and a family friend, Henry Frost. By 1908 they had started making repairs to new motor cars and when Frost died in 1909, Holden bought out Frost's family stake in the company. In 1913 they started to make side-car bodies for Harley Davidson motor cycles and in 1914 built their first complete car body and became increasingly involved in the motor vehicle industry towards the end of WW1. There is a reason why Holden, as well as other companies with a similar background, became so heavily involved in auto body building and that was mainly due to the Australian Government.

During WW1, the Government considered banning importation of all motor cars due to shipping space being at a premium. Protests came from the motor industry based on the fact that reliable transport for agricultural and manufacturing industries was required due to our vast transport distances. However, in **1917**, the Government did ban the import of complete cars but allowed the chassis unit to be imported, though a little later the terms of import Legislation were modified to include front guards, bonnet and the cowl which is the area between the back end of the bonnet and the windscreen base.

The South Australian born Sydney Cheney was already a self-made entrepreneur and lawyer who was given his start with Adelaide Coachbuilders, Duncan and Fraser, selling Oldsmobile cars. He later switched to selling the Scottish produced Argyll cars that already had a reputation in Britain for reliability trial wins. So, he used the Argyll in reliability trials out here with one notable event being the Melbourne to Sydney trial in 1905. After switching to Fords for a time, he went to the US in 1914 with the intention of starting up a Dodge agency in Australia and he started the Cheney Motor Company in 1915.

With the Government decision in 1917 to ban the import of car bodies as mentioned above, Cheney put a proposition to Henry Holden and his Son to set up a manufacturing facility to build bodies for the Dodge he was importing with the idea that they would also fit the Buick chassis. The Holden family immediately bought into a small Adelaide coachbuilding company, Frederick T Hack. They acquired a shipment of steel and produced a prototype Dodge body that was accepted by the Dodge dealer representatives and were soon up and running as a body builder with the Dodge bodies also fitted to the Buick chassis.

The end result was the start of a prosperous entity that was now part of an industry where in 1917, motor vehicle imports totalled 15,000, mostly T-Model Fords, but with 2300 Dodges and 1500 Buicks.

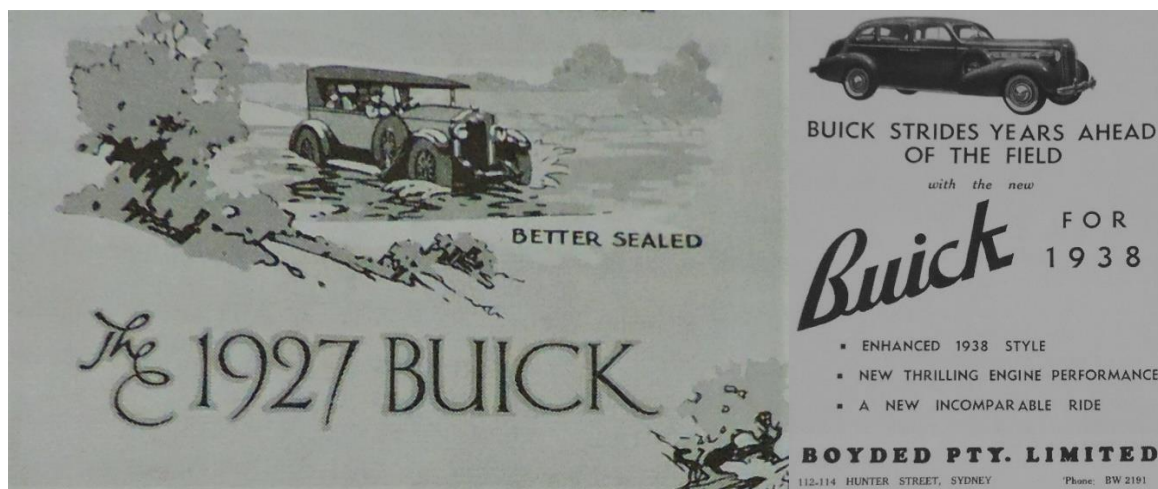
Holden began making bodies for other marques as well and in 1918 established **Holden Motor Body Builders Ltd** as a Division of Holden and Frost. By 1920, with Holden's investment in new machinery, it took only five man hours to complete a body compared to one hundred and sixty man hours at the start of their operations. At the end of WW1, Buicks were being sold Australia wide with Holden's roadster or passenger touring bodies. And so it was that each year Buicks with Holden bodies were sold and motoring organizations and clubs were being formed and holding events based on performance and not speed.

Cheney himself took up a Chevrolet agency in 1920 but soon moved to Melbourne where he made sure the Chevrolet was prominent in reliability trials. When General Motors opened up an assembly plant there in 1926, Cheney switched to Austin and Morris though. In later life, he sold Vauxhalls and Bedfords before taking on a Holden business in the late 1950's.



Above left - In 1928, this became the new Holden Motor Body Builders badge on bodies produced by Holden and at right is the General Motors Holden Ltd motif that commenced in 1931 with their new partnership with GM.

The Australian Government decree that two thirds of imported cars had to have a locally built body, led General Motors entering into a contract with Holden in 1923 to have them build all of the GM product bodies. At that point in time Holden imported their steel from Britain, timber was either Queensland Maple or Tasmanian Blackwood, and leather came from a Victorian firm. In 1926 **GME** withdrew from their oversight of Australia's GM production and distribution and handed over to a new company, GM Australia Pty Ltd with their office in Sydney. They soon set up a showroom in Melbourne for GM products. Now with GM plants in five states, Holden Motor Body Builders Limited supplied bodies to all five and they were attached to a chassis for, not only Buick, but GM marques that included Oldsmobile, Oakland, Chevrolet and later Pontiac, Marquette, Vauxhall, and La Salle.

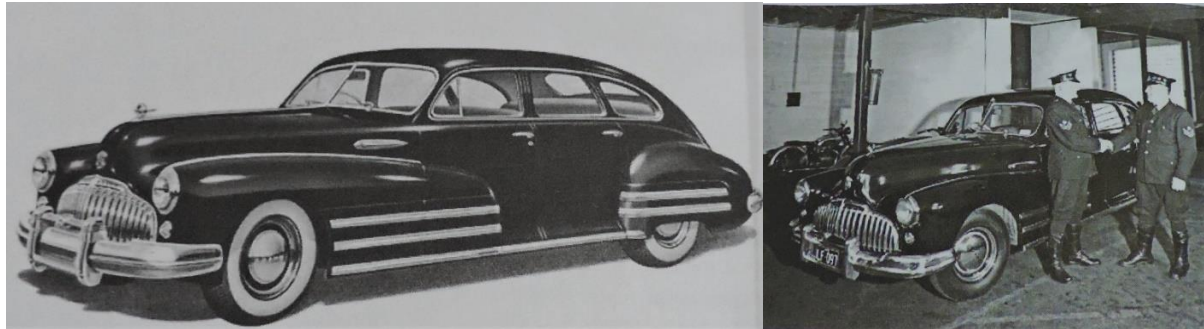


Above left is part of an Australian ad for the 1927 Buick and at right an ad for the 1938 model.

With the Great Depression, Holden almost closed down, but in 1931, GM, not wanting to lose this facility, formed a new company, **General Motors Holden's Ltd**. Part of the deal was that Holden would still make bodies for other makes, though that ceased in 1946.

The Holden family were the major stockholders in the new company initially, but GM had acquired full ownership by 1952. The rest is history as they say.

During the war, there was limited car production and most were taken up by the military, so in 1946, even with steel shortages, Holden started to use modified pre-WW2 bodies for Buicks as well as on the Chevrolet, Pontiac, and Oldsmobile chassis.



Above left is the 1946 Holden bodied Buick and at right NSW Police with their 1947 model.

Looking back at Buick in Australia, the marque definitely made an enduring impact on Australia motoring after 1908 due to their reputation for high quality finish and appointments, yet they were also appreciated for their toughness and being able to handle our atrocious road system and the long distances to be travelled. Just prior to WW1, Buick was the second biggest seller in Oz. As well, they were by far a better product than the British models being imported into Australia back then. Buicks were being used by the mail contractors in Western Queensland and as service vehicles throughout rural NSW. Over time, they began to be used by Governments for senior officials and by Ambulance Services and Police Forces.

After WW2, with the Australian Government owing a massive debt to Britain, pressure mounted to have imports from Britain increased and vehicles coming from the US reduced in number. As well, there was now a push for an Australian designed and locally built car. When GMH ceased producing Buicks with the introduction of the new Holden models in 1948, most Buick dealers switched to Holden or Vauxhall.

Though some dealers continued to import RHD Buicks from the US, this ceased in 1953 with the end of RHD Buicks being made in Flint. Even so, many Government Departments kept their Buicks for years as did many private companies. As an example, in 1947 the Commonwealth Government ordered thirty Buicks with more ordered in 1948. These were kept in service well into the 1950's. The NSW Ambulance Service had many 1947 Buicks in their fleet with some still in service into the early 1960's. Mr Joe Cahill, elected as the NSW Premier in 1952, had a Buick as his official car.

When Buick ended production of RHD cars in 1953, some Australian dealers would import LHD Buicks from the US and have them converted to RHD as was happening with other North American marques well into the late 1960's.

See next pics. Enthusiasts still wanting a large North American car, notwithstanding the high import taxes imposed by the Government, led to a mini-industry of RHD conversions starting up. This seemed to end around 1970 leading to Buick devotees having to organise this operation on a private basis. Today, the import and conversion business still takes place as we know with Companies like HSV, but imported LHD cars over 30 years old can now be registered in most states. Buick owners car clubs are well established and thriving today in Australia and that is why so many vintage and classic Buicks have arrived in Australia over the last thirty or forty years. *Terry.*



Author's 1:18 scale diecast model of a 1964 Buick Riviera by Highway 61. These Riviera models were one of the most popular Buick models imported in the mid to late 1960's for conversion by dealers to RHD.

THE HILLMAN AVENGER - *Trying to Keep up appearances.*

When looking at a U.S. on-line motoring site recently, I spotted a **1970 Plymouth 'Cricket'** coming up for auction. I couldn't recall this model, but a comment was made relating to one being seen in the British TV show '**Keeping up Appearances.**' However, a following comment indicated that, being a British TV show, it would have been a Hillman Avenger. Now I knew about that model, but couldn't remember how it fitted into that particular television show.



Above left is the North American Plymouth Cricket with a bit of a flower power style advertising at right

I know that some HMAC members have watched and enjoyed 'Keeping up Appearances' on TV. Remember **Hyacinth Bucket**, pronounced bouquet or 'boo-kay' and her hen-pecked hubby, *Richard*. I did some quick research and I did find the **Hillman Avenger** that appears in the TV show. 'Appears' is probably not the right term as it is the rusted out, sort of yellowish orange wreck, located in the front yard of Hyacinth's sister, Daisy, and her husband Onslow's home. I might add that there is enough rubbish around it to embarrass a genuine hoarder and the Avenger wreck is actually the place of abode of Daisy and Onslow's pet dog.

In case you haven't seen this television show, it revolves around Hyacinth, a snobbish, trying to be middle-class lady who has aspirations to rise a little bit higher up the social scale, hence Hyacinth's pronunciation of her surname. She tends to stand over her husband who is a gentle soul and drives a nice pale metallic blue 1986 **Rover 216** four door saloon. I might add that when this television series was being made in the early 90's, Rover was still considered just a teeny bit above 'middle class,' even if the Rover 216 was really a badged Honda Ballade.

Rover, then owned by Austin, was suffering from poor sales and in financial trouble, so they worked a deal with Honda which would save them money in putting a new model onto the market. At first it was the Triumph Acclaim, a re-badged Honda Ballade, that was reasonably successful and this led to Austin Rover looking in that direction for their upcoming Rover 200 Series. The British workforce proved competent for once in putting together a car that mirrored well-known Japanese quality and the Rover 213, and later 216, became a strong seller with 418,000 models leaving the showrooms in just over five years. The little sedan was often in the top ten best-selling list of sedans in Britain back then.

Best of all for Rover was that revisions to the exterior, as well as their ensuring the fitting of a high quality interior, gave the 216 a more 'exclusive' reputation in the motoring world. As well, their market research indicated that customers perceived the Rover 216 as being an exclusive and high priced car. So, perhaps that is why the Rover 216 was selected to be driven by the Buckets, or at least as Mrs Bucket's preferred car. It was all about 'being seen' and reputation and, as I read somewhere, the Rover of that era was still a car for the 'aspiring classes.'

On the other hand, we have Hyacinth's Sister, Daisy, and her husband Onslow. Both live in a shabby council home with Daisy's sister, Rose, and their elderly senile father. Their whole lifestyle is horizontally opposed to Hyacinth's world of snobbery and her often mentioned desire to host candle-lit dinner parties. Daisy is a very affectionate wife, however, Onslow is shown to be a dull, lazy, overweight and unemployed type who loves to spend all day and night in front of their ancient and unreliable television smoking a cigarette with a beer in his hand. You know the type. He drives around in a beat-up old 1978 Cortina with various coloured panels and which usually pours smoke out the exhaust. Through their great acting abilities, the couple playing the parts make for a very funny situation comedy.

Since the hero here is the Hillman Avenger, let's take a look at the real thing. Rootes was taken over by Chrysler in 1967 and soon the Avenger model concept was in the pipeline and given the go-ahead to proceed by Chrysler.

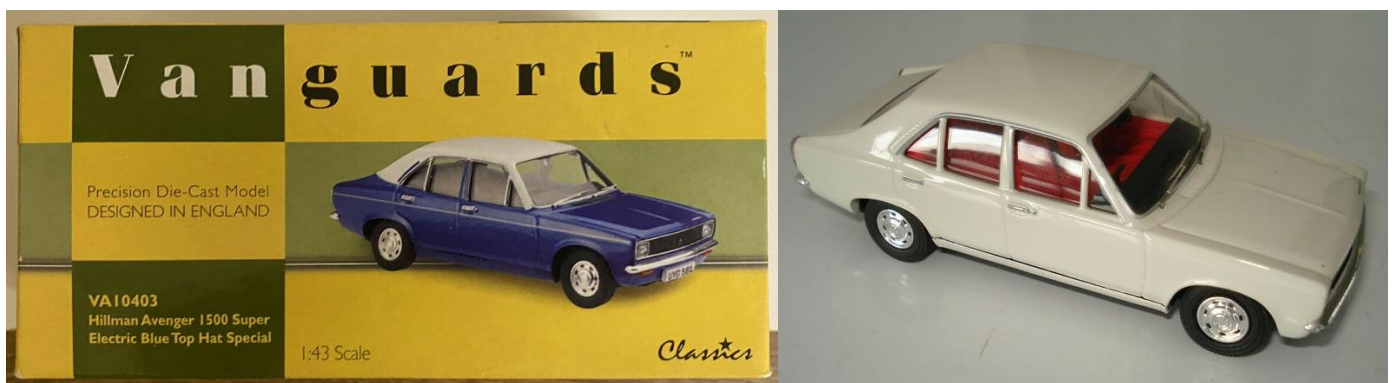
The Hillman Avenger was the first project by the Rootes Group under Chrysler's ownership, but also their last model made, as the Rootes name was soon gone and future vehicles would come from Chrysler's design facilities.



A model of the 1971 Hillman Avenger GL in 1:43 scale white metal by Lansdowne. Note the quad headlights

When released in 1970, the Hillman Avenger came as a four-door sedan in three trim levels, the 'DL' entry level, the 'Super' mid-range model and the 'GL' luxury version. The DL and Super could be had with either the 40 kw 1250cc or 65 kw 1500cc straight four overhead valve engines, but the GL was only available with the 1500 cc engine. The entry level DL model was very basic with plain vinyl seating, rubber floor matting and not many extras compared to the Super version. The Super had carpeting, arm rests and a few other extras, but the same inexpensive dashboard as the DL. The GL version had carpeting and luxury equipment such as reclining front seats and a well-furnished dashboard with full instrumentation. The exterior of the GL model had a more substantial grille with twin headlights compared to a cheaper small square headlight setup on the DL and Super.

Overall, its body style was similar to most British compacts of that era with a slight 'coke' bottle hip, short boot lid and long bonnet and was judged by motoring journalists to be a reasonably handling and comfortable cruiser and, though never a real competitor to the Cortina, it was still a good seller for Chrysler. The four-door models were later joined by a station wagon in 1972 and a two-door version in 1973. In 1976, the Hillman name was replaced by a Chrysler moniker on the Avenger, and later as a Talbot after Peugeot-Citroen bought out Chrysler's Europe Division in 1978. In different marques, the Avenger ended in 1981 with close to 640,000 rolling off the assembly line.



Above pics are two versions of Corgi Vanguard 1:43 scale 1970 Hillman Avenger Super models.

Chrysler U.S. wanted a sub-compact model to go up against the Ford Pinto and Chevrolet Vega. Their Dodge cousin chose an alliance with Mitsubishi to sell their Colt models but Plymouth decided to take the Hillman Avenger to North America. That is where the 'Cricket' model came in as a re-badged Avenger in 1970, in left hand drive and available as a four door sedan. A station wagon was introduced in 1972. Modifications were made to comply with US Federal laws such as having high-backed seats to meet headrest rules and side of body traffic indicators.

The problem was that price wise, it was very close to the Dodge Dart and Plymouth Valiant, vehicles slightly roomier and much better equipped. It didn't help that the imported Avenger became known for having poor quality issues that led to poor sales, something the Colt models didn't suffer from. The US Cricket model was a totally new vehicle but unlike Britain's Avenger, wasn't really given a chance to iron the bugs out as they say. The evidence that it could have ended up being a reasonable motor vehicle can be seen in the British version sales numbers mentioned above. However, the Cricket was dropped from the US market in mid-1973. *Terry.*

.DID YOU KNOW? A SNIPPET ABOUT THE BMW LOGO.



The *lead-in pic*, courtesy of BMW, shows up the original BMW logo on what appears to be a very old motor vehicle rim 'knock-off'. This logo was first registered for use in 1917 and, though changes have been made since then, most of us will instantly recognise the celebrated BMW logo.

I read recently that BMW have changed their logo to reflect today's 'digital' age, whatever that infers. The outer black panel that has surrounded the blue and white centre panel since 1917, will now become transparent. Though the new logo has been used on their electric concept vehicle, it will soon be displayed on all future BMW vehicles.

Interestingly, the BMW logo has only been changed five times previously, and though first registered in 1917 with the B.M.W initials, it was originally used in 1913 by the founder of the 'Rapp Motorenwerke' company, Karl Rapp. A silhouette horse logo, matching the profile of the black knight chess piece, filled the circular centre panel. The letters 'BMW' were not included, rather the words 'Rapp Motor'. The company, amongst other products, was an aeroplane engine manufacturer and I have read that this may have led to the myth regarding the centrepiece of the later BMW logo representing a spinning propeller.

Rapp left in 1917 and the company was re-registered as the 'Bayerische Motoren Werke', with the centre horse motif being replaced with the Bavarian flag colours of blue and white to represent the country of origin of the company. Though the logo was used on their aero products and stationery from 1918, it was not used on BMW motor vehicles till 1923 with the introduction of BMW's first road-going vehicle, the R 32 motorbike. Then in 1929, it was affixed to their first automobile, a licenced version of Britain's little Austin Seven.

Briefly, there were only slight changes made to the logo over time which originally had the two gold rings, *as in the lead-in pic*, with gold BMW letters in the black panel surrounding the Bavarian flag colours. In 1933, the BMW monogram was altered to a thicker font and remained the same till 1953 when the gold letters and rings were changed to white. In 1963, the font was changed again on the BMW letters and in 1997, the rings and the BMW letters were changed to silver. For some reason I am not aware of, with each of these minor changes to the logo, there were also changes to the shades of the blue colour in the centre piece. *Terry.*



Check out the BMW factory at War's end in 1945 and look at the company today, amazing.